Larkin

Nelani Midgley Walker

September 12, 1940 ~ March 10, 2018

Nelani Midgley Walker passed away March 10th from an aggressive cancer. She was surrounded by family, including all seven of her children.

Nelani grew up in Kansas City, Missouri, the youngest child of Kenneth and Ingaborg Midgley who encouraged her innate desire for education and self-improvement. As a teen and young adult she studied ballet, loved horseback riding and read voraciously. She left home to study biology at Stanford and the University of London, eventually receiving bachelors and masters degrees. While teaching high school in Palo Alto, California, she met Ronald Walker in a Stanford singles ward. They married, and Lani began to apply her intelligence and achievements to raising a family.

Lani was a remarkable mother, supporting, educating, and encouraging her children, always with an eye to their own independence and competence. She often said that her home "was a laboratory, not a museum; because she was raising scientists and builders, not curators." She accepted each of her children as individuals and fostered their strengths while encouraging them to master their weaknesses. She had rich personal relationships with each one and left a family legacy of learning, charitable service and abiding faith.

During these busy and demanding years, Lani championed her husband's endeavors as well. She supported him in work, church and public service, and was one of his best editors and most vocal advocates. She shared his love of LDS church history and spent a lifetime studying and learning church doctrine. Her love of God and commitment to the Church never wavered.

After her children were well launched, she focused her energies outward; serving widely in the community and church,always, doing more than was asked. She began as a volunteer reader at an underperforming elementary school and ultimately created a program providing books, toothbrushes and clean clothing for the entire school. Called to organize her ward's Relief Society activities, she focused on meeting the needs of the local homeless, girls in Africa, and literacy programs. Over the course of her adult life, Lani served in almost every calling for which she qualified. She also loved serving in the Salt Lake Temple, and for over a decade served as a docent in The Church History Museum.

She was preceded in death by her parents Kenneth and Ingaborg, and her husband Ronald. She is survived by her seven children Jennifer (Michael Thomas), Allison (Jonathan Toronto), Jonathan (Launi), Elizabeth (Donald Mehr), David (Karen), Peter (Maret), and Andrew (Sarah); as well as 22 grandchildren.

A viewing will be held at Larkin Mortuary, 260 E South Temple, Salt Lake City on Friday, March 16th from 6-8 pm. Funeral services will be held at the Ensign Peak Ward building of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 155 North Sandrun Road, Salt Lake City on Saturday, March 17th at 11 am, with a viewing starting at 9:45 am.

Shortly before passing Nelani established the Ronald W. and Nelani M. Walker Endowed Fund at Brigham Young University, with the mission to support their shared vision of the powerful role that education plays in faith, community and progress. In lieu of flowers, please consider contributing to the fund in her honor: https://tinyurl.com/NelaniWalker